

Sacramento man charged with mailing pipe bomb

Attempted murder charges were filed against a Sacramento man yesterday by Oakland police, who said he mailed a pipe bomb to his estranged wife that failed to go off.

The suspect, Daniel Lee Davis, 47, a self-employed wood craftsman who has been in custody since Friday, is scheduled to enter a plea today in Oakland Municipal Court. He is charged with attempted murder and attempted explosion of a destructive device with the intent to commit murder and is being held without bail.

Oakland police, working with postal inspectors, began their investigation last Tuesday night when Florence Davis, 46, discovered a package in front of her apartment door in the 300 block of Staten Avenue that bore a Sacramento postmark.

Police said she and her husband had been married more than 20 years before separating almost three years ago. The divorce proceedings had been at times bitter, police said.

Sgt. Jim Hahn said that when Mrs. Davis opened the package she found a pipe bomb and immediately called police.

Hahn said the Alameda County sheriff's bomb squad was summoned and Sheriff's Lt. Dean Hess and Deputy T.J. Rounph disarmed the device.

The device consisted of a length of pipe filled with gunpowder and powered by two batteries, officers said. It was designed to explode upon opening of the package. But Hahn said it failed to detonate because a wire had come loose.

Had it exploded, Hahn said, "It was powerful enough to kill (Mrs. Davis) and possibly the people in the adjacent apartments."

After interviewing Mrs. Davis, police got enough evidence to obtain search warrants.

Hahn said that Mrs. Davis, a state employee, had moved to Oakland from Sacramento a year ago to get away from her husband.

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Retired CHP officer guilty of mailing bomb

A retired California Highway Patrol officer has been convicted of attempting to murder his estranged wife by mailing her a pipe bomb.

The officer, Daniel Lee Davis, found guilty by a jury last week in Alameda County Superior Court, faces possible prison terms of five to seven years.

Davis, now 49, and his wife, Florence Davis, 48, separated in July 1981 after 20 years of marriage. Their relationship after that, said Deputy District Attorney Jack Quatman, was "acrimonious."

On April 5, 1984, Davis mailed a package from Sacramento, where he lived, to his wife's apartment in Oakland, where she had moved the year before. She received the package five days later, opened it and found the bomb.

It didn't explode, police said, because a wire had come loose. They said the device was powerful enough to have killed her and possibly people in the adjacent apartment.

The connection between Daniel Davis and the bomb, said Quatman, was a switch that would have set off the explosion. "We discovered an invoice for one in his house," Quatman said. Investigators repeated the order to the company and it sent back an identical switch.

Davis was a police officer in Willows for four years before he joined the highway patrol in 1964. He retired in 1982.

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Bomb suspect pleads innocent

OAKLAND — A Sacramento man accused of mailing a pipe bomb to his estranged wife in Oakland pleaded innocent yesterday to the charges.

Daniel Lee Davis, 47, will return to Oakland Municipal Court on April 26 for a pre-trial hearing and again April 30 for preliminary examination. He is charged with attempted murder and the attempted explosion of a destructive device with the intent to commit murder.

Davis is accused of mailing a pipe bomb loaded with gunpowder to his estranged wife, Florence. Police said a wire worked loose and it failed to explode.